

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00
CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 HA-05 MCT-01 ACDA-12 IO-13 /091 W
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O P 071717Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEIDATE 8555
INFO AMEMBASSY BURSELS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
USIA WASHDC PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BANGUI
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE POUCH
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KIGALI
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI
AMCONSUL BUKAVU

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KINSHASA 2213

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINR, CG
SUBJECT: NINETY-ONE ZAIRIANS TO BE TRIED FOR TERRORISM

REF A) KINSHASA 1796; B) KINSHASA 1944; C) KINSHASA 2054

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: ON MARCH 6 PRESIDENT MOBUTU FINALLY BROKE GOZ
SILENCE ABOUT AN ALLEGED PLOT WHICH HAD BEEN THE SUBJECT OF MUCH
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LOCAL RUMOR AND SOME FOREIGN PRESS REPORTING. NINETY-ONE ZAIRIANS,
INCLUDING 67 MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY, ARE TO BE PUT ON TRIAL
BEGINNING MARCH 8. DENYING THAT THE CONSPIRATORS HAD ATTEMPTED
A COUP D'ETAT, THE PRESIDENT MAINTAINED THAT THEY HAD PLANNED A
CAMPAIGN OF URBAN TERRORISM AND A PROGRAM TO SOW DISAFFECTION
AMONG THE TROOPS IN SHABA. ALLEGEDLY THREE UNNAMED FOREIGN
COUNTRIES WERE INVOLVED, INCLUDING ONE AFRICAN NATION. END

SUMMARY.

2. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH ZAIRIAN PRESS AGENCY (AZAP), PRESIDENT MOBUTU GAVE STATEMENT WHICH PUBLICIZED FOR FIRST TIME IN ZAIRE THE ALLEGED PLOT REPORTED IN REFTELS. HE SAID THAT TRIAL OF 67 MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY AND 24 CIVILIANS WILL BEGIN ON MARCH 8. PLOTTERS ARE ACCUSED OF PLANNING A CAMPAIGN OF URBAN TERRORISM. THE PRESIDENT EMPHASIZED THAT THE TRIAL WOULD BE CONDUCTED WITH ALL DUE LEGALITY. HE SAID THAT THE DEFENDANTS THEMSELVES HAD CHOSEN 13 DEFENSE LAWYERS AND THAT FOUR OTHERS WOULD DEFEND THOSE TOO POOR TO ENGAGE A LAWYER. THE TRIAL IS TO BE OBSERVED BY VARIOUS PERSONALITIES, LARGELY RANKING MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT AND PARTY, BUT ALSO INCLUDING THE DEAN OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS (THE AMBASSADOR OF THE IVORY COAST) AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THREE PRESS AGENCIES: AZAP (IN ITS CAPACITY OF REUTERS LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE), AFP, AND THE NEW CHINA NEWS AGENCY. THE TRIAL TO BE HELD AT OAU VILLAGE WILL BE RECORDED AND FILMED; WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE LIVE MEDIA COVERAGE. AZAP QUOTED PRESIDENT MOBUTU IN THE FOLLOWING TERMS: "GOOD JUSTICE OUGHT TO BE FAIR FOR EVERYONE, EVEN TERRORISTS".

3. DETAILS OF THE ALLEGED PLOT AS GIVEN BY AZAP QUOTING PRESIDENT MOBUTU FOLLOW:

4. BEGIN EMBASSY TRANSLATION: "IN FACT THERE NEVER WAS A 'FAILED COUP D'ETAT'. WHAT PUBLIC OPINION SHOULD REMEMBER IS THAT SINCE 1976 A SYSTEMATIC CAMPAIGN OF CORRUPTING A TINY FRACTION OF CONFIDENTIAL

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OFFICER-BUREAUCRATS HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN FROM ABROAD. I WILL BE MORE PRECISE. FOR SEVERAL YEARS, THREE FOREIGN COUNTRIES, INCLUDING ONE AFRICAN, HAVE PLANNED TO PUT SPOKES IN THE WHEELS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY REGIME OF ZAIRE IN ORDER TO INDUCE INTERNATIONAL OPINION TO QUESTION THE FUTURE OF ZAIRE AND TO DOUBT THE CREDIBILITY OF ITS CHIEF.

"SINCE THE PLAN HAS NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL TO DATE -- THE REGIME HAVING ITS FEET FIRMLY PLANTED ON THE GROUND -- THE CORRUPTING COUNTRIES HAVE HAD RECOURSE TO A SUBSTITUTE: URBAN TERRORISM.

"THE OPERATION WAS TO UNFOLD IN THREE PHASES: FIRST OF ALL -- BLOW UP THE MATADI-KINSHASA PIPELINE; DESTROY INGA, THAT WORK OF ART WHICH HAS RAISED ZAIRE INTO THE RANKS OF THE WORLD GIANTS OF INDUSTRIAL ENERGY; AND BOOBY TRAP BIG STORES LIKE AFRICAN-LUX ALONG WITH MOVIE THEATERS AND PRESS OFFICES. THIS FIRST PHASE OF THE OPERATION WAS TO TAKE PLACE DURING THE NIGHT OF LAST FEBRUARY 18 TO SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19. A COMMUNIQUE SEIZED DURING THE SEARCH UNDERTAKEN WHEN THESE OFFICERS WERE ARRESTED IS RATHER REVEALING CONCERNING EXTERNAL PARTICIPATION IN THE CONCEPTUAL PHASE. OTHER DOCUMENTS EVEN POINT OUT THAT SHOULD ANY PLOTTERS BE CAUGHT IN THE ACT, THE OTHERS OUGHT TO REGROUP IN A NEIGHBORING COUNTRY AND THEN RETURN TO CERTAIN WESTERN CAPITALS IN ORDER TO REINFORCE THE RANKS OF THE TINY GROUPS WHICH FOR TWO WEEKS HAVE BEEN

SATURATING THE FOREIGN PRESS WITH LYING COMMUNIQUE TO WHICH NO
ONE ANY LONGER GIVES CREDENCE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KINSHASA 2213

"IT IS EASY TO UNDERSTAND NOW WHY THE GUIDE, MOBUTU SESE
SEKO, AS SOON AS HE HAD BEEN INFORMED OF THE DETAILS OF THIS
OPERATION, ORDERED THE CLOSURE OF OUR FRONTIERS WITH BRAZZAVILLE
AND THE ARREST ONE AFTER ANOTHER OF ALL THE AUTHORS OF THIS VAST
PLOT TO TERRORIZE THE POPULATION. THIS RAPID REACTION OF THE
GUIDE MOBUTU SESE SEKO IS JUSTIFIED BY THE FACT THAT ONE COULD NOT
LEAVE THE PLOTTERS THE OPPORTUNITY OF GOING ON TO THE SECOND PHASE.
THAT PHASE CONSISTED OF THROWING GRENADES AT THE EMBASSIES OF
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FRANCE AND MOROCCO, IN ORDER TO MAKE INTERNATIONAL OPINION BELIEVE THAT THE ZAIRIANS DISAPPROVED OF THEIR INTERVENTION IN SHABA, AND ALSO OF ASSASSINATING CERTAIN CLOSE RELATIVES AND EVEN CERTAIN CHILDREN OF THE CHIEF OF STATE SO THAT, AS ONE OF THE ACCUSED ADMITTED, THIS COUP DE GRACE FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF HIS SPOUSE WOULD PROVE FATAL AFTER HAVING DRIVEN HIM INTO A STATE OF SHOCK.

5. "THE THIRD PHASE WOULD SIMPLY HAVE BEEN A MATTER OF PUBLIC RELATIONS: 'IN ZAIRE NOTHING GOES RIGHT.' 'MOBUTU HAS BEEN VOMITED UP BY THE PEOPLE.' 'THE PEOPLE ATTACK HIS FAMILY IN ORDER TO OBTAIN VENGEANCE.' 'THE PEOPLE WANT NOTHING MORE TO DO WITH HIM,' ETC. THIS WOULD BE DONE IN SUCH A WAY THAT WESTERNERS 'WOULD PUT PRESSURE' ON GENERAL MOBUTU IN ORDER TO BRING ON HIS RESIGNATION.

"AS ONE CAN SEE, IT IS NOT, AS MANY ABROAD HAVE MAINTAINED, A QUESTION OF A 'FAILED COUP D'ETAT' BUT OF A SEDUCTION OF 'INTELLECTUAL' OFFICERS AND BUREAUCRATS WHO HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO RESIST COMMITTING TREACHERY IN RETURN FOR MONEY. WHAT IS COMFORTING IS THAT NO OFFICER OF COMBAT TROOPS, NO SOLDIER OF THIS CORPS, HAS BEEN COMPROMISED IN THIS PLAN OF URBAN TERRORISM. WHAT WOULD HAVE BECOME OF A CITY LIKE KINSHASA IF A MOVIE THEATER LIKE THE PALLADIUM HAD SUDDENLY CAUGHT FIRE DURING THE PROJECTION OF ONE OF THOSE WESTERNS WHICH THE INHABITANTS OF KINSHASA DOTE UPON? OR IN THE AFRICAN-LUX STORE DURING ONE OF THE GREAT SALES? AND SALONGO? AND ELIMA? AND SO MANY UNNAMED PUBLIC INSTALLATIONS?"

6. AZAP ARTICLE ENDED IN FOLLOWING TERMS: "ONCE THE NETWORK WAS DESTROYED, HORRIBLE UNDERTAKINGS WERE DISCOVERED WHICH RAN THE RISK OF SAPPING THE MORALE OF OUR TROOPS. THE SOLDIERS OPERATING IN SHABA WERE ALWAYS PAID LATE. IT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED THAT ONE OF THE ARRESTED OFFICERS, WHO WAS IN CHARGE OF PAYING SALARIES, DELIBERATELY DELAYED DOING SO IN ORDER TO CREATE UNEASE

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IN THE RANKS OF THE SOLDIERS. ONLY PART OF THE SUPPLIES OFFERED BY FRIENDLY COUNTRIES ARRIVED AT THE FRONT; THIS SAME NETWORK RESTRICTED THEIR DISPATCH IN ORDER TO CREATE DISCONTENT AMONG THE TROOPS. THAT WAS THE BOOBY TRAP WHICH WE FOUND.

WASN'T IT NECESSARY TO DEFUSE IT?"

7. COMMENT: AFTER DELAYING ANNOUNCEMENT OF ALLEGED MID-FEBRUARY PLOT AND ARRESTS FOR ALMOST THREE WEEKS, GOZ HAS NOW STATED OFFICIAL VERSION OF EVENTS. WHILE TRIALS OF THIS NATURE ARE VERY UNPREDICTABLE, MOBUTU'S REFERENCES TO INVOLVEMENT OF THREE UNNAMED FOREIGN COUNTRIES PRESUMABLY MEAN THAT SOVIET UNION, CUBA AND ANGOLA MAY BE IN FOR SOME ROUGH TREATMENT DURING

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